



STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF LAW & PUBLIC SAFETY
DIVISION OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS
BOARD OF NURSING

IN THE MATTER OF THE LICENSE OF	:	Administrative Action
	:	
	:	
	:	
SHARON D. WASHINGTON, APN, RN	:	FINAL ORDER
	:	OF DISCIPLINE
	:	
Advanced Practice Nurse	:	
License # 26NN10242300	:	
	:	
Registered Professional Nurse	:	
License # 26NR10242300	:	
	:	
TO PRACTICE NURSING IN THE	:	
STATE OF NEW JERSEY	:	

This matter was opened to the New Jersey State Board of Nursing ("Board") upon receipt of information which the Board has reviewed and upon which the following findings of fact and conclusions of law are made:

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Sharon D. Washington ("Respondent") is an Advanced Practice Nurse and a Registered Professional Nurse in the State of New Jersey and has been a licensee at all times relevant hereto.

2. On or about May 29, 2013, Respondent completed and submitted an online biennial application to renew her Registered Professional Nurse license for the period of June 1, 2013 to May 31, 2015.

3. Respondent was asked on the biennial renewal application whether Respondent would have "completed the required continuing education credits by May 31, 2013," referring to the biennial renewal period of June 1, 2011 to May 31, 2013. Respondent answered "Yes" and certified that answer by submitting the online application.

4. On November 18, 2013 the Board received a flagging notice indicating that Respondent was arrested on November 15, 2013 by the Westfield Police for violation of N.J.S.A. 2C:5-5A (Possess/Manufacture Burglar Tools) and N.J.S.A. 2C:20-11B (Shoplifting). The Board sent a letter of inquiry requesting certain information and documents regarding the criminal matter, Respondent's nursing practice, and continuing education to Respondent's address of record in Roselle Park, New Jersey, via regular and certified mail on or about November 22, 2013. The regular mailing was not returned; the certified mailing was unclaimed and returned.

5. To date, Respondent has not responded to the Board's request for information.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

Respondent's failure to respond to the Board's request for information constitutes a failure to cooperate with a Board investigation, in contravention of N.J.A.C. 13:45C-1.2 and 1.3, which the Board deems professional misconduct pursuant to N.J.S.A. 45:1-21(e) and also subjects Respondent to disciplinary action pursuant to N.J.S.A. 45:1-21(h).

Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 13:37-5.3(b), nurses are required to complete a minimum of thirty (30) hours of continuing education during the preceding biennial period in order to renew their licenses. Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 13:37-5.3(f), nurses are required to maintain documentation of completion of continuing education for a period of four years after completion, and shall submit such documentation to the Board upon request.

By virtue of having failed to respond to the letter of inquiry, Respondent is deemed to have failed to demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the Board, that Respondent completed the continuing education credits required for renewal during the biennial period of June 1, 2011 to May 31, 2013. The Board therefore finds Respondent in violation of N.J.A.C. 13:37-5.3(b) and 13:37-5.3(f), which in turn subjects Respondent to sanctions pursuant to N.J.S.A. 45:1-21(e) and (h).

Respondent's use of dishonesty and misrepresentation during the license renewal process in falsifying her continuing education information constitutes a violation of N.J.S.A. 45:1-21(b), subjecting Respondent to sanctions.

Based on the foregoing findings and conclusions, a Provisional Order of Discipline was entered on February 26, 2015, provisionally suspending respondent's nursing license and imposing a reprimand and a total of \$750 in civil penalties. A copy of the Order was served upon respondent by certified and regular mail at her address of record. The Provisional Order was subject to finalization by the Board at 5:00 p.m. on the 30th day following entry unless respondent requested a modification or dismissal of the stated Findings of Fact or Conclusions of Law by submitting a written request for modification or dismissal setting forth in writing any and all reasons why said findings and conclusions should be modified or dismissed and submitting any and all documents or other written evidence supporting respondent's request for consideration and reasons therefor.

Respondent replied to the Provisional Order, submitting documentation of timely completion of nursing continuing education for the 2011-2013 licensing cycle. Accordingly, the board determined that the reprimand and \$250 civil penalty for

infractions relating to continuing education were not warranted. However respondent still has not provided information or documentation relating to the 2013 arrest, such as a copy of the complaint, or information and documentation of the disposition of the arrest. Therefore the Board determined that suspension, and imposition of the \$500 civil penalty for failure to cooperate with a Board investigation was appropriate.

ACCORDINGLY, IT IS on this 8th day of May, 2015,
ORDERED that:

1. Respondent's licenses to practice nursing are suspended until such time as Respondent cooperates fully with the Board's investigation by providing the Board with the information requested in the Board's letter of inquiry.

2. Respondent is assessed a civil penalty in the amount of five hundred dollars (\$500) for failure to cooperate with a Board investigation. Payment shall be made by money order, bank cashier check or certified check, made payable to the State of New Jersey or by wire transfer, direct deposit or credit card payment delivered or mailed to George Hebert, Executive Director, State Board of Nursing, P.O. Box 45010, Newark, New Jersey 07101. Any other form of payment will be rejected and will be returned to the party making payment. Payment shall be due no later than fifteen (15) days after the filing of this

order. In the event respondent fails to make a timely payment, a certificate of debt shall be filed in accordance with N.J.S.A. 45:1-24 and the Board may bring such other proceedings as authorized by law.

3. Respondent shall refrain from practicing as a nurse and shall not represent herself as a Registered Professional Nurse or an Advanced Practice Nurse until such time as her license is reinstated. Any practice in this State prior to reinstatement shall constitute grounds for a charge of unlicensed practice.

4. The Board reserves the right to initiate disciplinary proceedings based upon any information that Respondent ultimately provides in response to the letter of inquiry or upon any new information the Board receives.

NEW JERSEY STATE BOARD OF NURSING

By: Patricia Murphy PhD APN
Patricia Murphy, PhD, APN
President